Research Assistant Position for MS student
Dr. Katherine Lee is seeking candidates with interest in a 2-year funded graduate research assistant position. This position and related research are in collaboration with Drs. Tim Prather and Eva Strand, and supported by the Joint Fire Science Program.

Degree: Master of Science, Applied Economics
Supervisor: Dr. Katherine Lee, Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology

Project overview
Wildfires in the Great Basin of the western United States are increasing on both frequency and size. To combat these large and frequent fires, fuel break systems are used to aid fire managers in suppression efforts because they slow down the fire, reduce the flame length, and under some weather and fuel conditions, even stop the fire. Several types of fuel breaks- namely green strips, brown strips, and herbicide treatments- have been installed or are proposed to be installed in southern Idaho's sagebrush steppe, yet few studies have systematically considered how fuel breaks impact sagebrush ecosystems, or overall fire risk, magnitude, and dynamics. It is therefore a high priority to identify metrics to assess fuel break performance in controlling wildfire and minimizing impacts on valued resources in sagebrush steppe ecosystems.

Socio-economic research description
The student will assist in developing a catalog of potential economic impacts of fires and fuel breaks to sagebrush steppe user groups, including livestock producers, land managers, and recreationists. Using this catalog, a strategy for identifying and collecting the data necessary to quantify these impacts in our study area. The impacts are expected to include direct fire suppression costs, loss of forage value, reduction in quality of recreational sites, costs of evacuations and interruptions of economic activities, etc.
The student could assist with the development of a survey instrument that will be used to measure stakeholder perceptions of the trade-offs involved in different wildfire management approaches. Public perceptions and consequently political acceptability of alternative management approaches do not necessarily reflect cost effectiveness, but policy creating and communication requires understanding what the perceptions are.

There is also an opportunity for the student to be employed as a project research technician during the summer 2021 field season.

Qualifications:
- Bachelor's degree in economics or a related field
- Interest in economics and its application to natural resource management and learning to work across disciplines

Application instructions:
- Provide (by email: katherinelee@uidaho.edu) your CV/resume, statement of courses taken, and cover letter describing your interest in the project.
- Apply for admission to the University of Idaho MS program in Applied Economics. Please reach out to me first, otherwise your application may be rejected (timing of this opportunity does not align with the UI College of Graduate Studies timeline)